

Harold Gibbons on the National Master Freight Agreement, August 30, 1963

- Harold Gibbons:* With this new contract, the organization is seeking to achieve a series of objectives in the negotiation of the National Freight Agreement. Basically and number one, it's being arrived after the purpose of greater benefits to our membership, but in pursuit of that objective, the National Agreement represents a real opportunity for us to bring greater industrial stability to the trucking industry. It for the first time now will make it possible for us to be orderly progress in the avoidance of strikes and stoppages. And, finally, it is made imperative and a necessity because of the kind of laws which have been passed recently in the Congress dealing with the matter of secondary boycotts. If we are to avoid becoming strike breakers, it's necessary that we have a national agreement with a common expiration date.
- Male Voice 1:* [Unintelligible] ...national rail signs... [Unintelligible] ...explain the relationship, now that we will achieve that national contract [Unintelligible] and bring up a similar possibility for national trucking.
- Harold Gibbons:* Now we see no similar possibility occurring in connection with the national trucking and the national agreement in trucking because, of course in the first place, the railroad dispute should never have arrived at in Congress. The only reason it wound up in Congress is because the administration, the government, refused to permit collective bargaining to take place in the railroad industry. And we don't anticipate any intervention on the part of the government to prevent collective bargaining in the trucking industry, and therefore, we have every confidence that we'll have no occasion for our affairs to wind up in the Congress.
- Male Voice 2:* [Unintelligible]
- Harold Gibbons:* Of course, a nationwide strike is a possibility, I would suggest, even as of now, with or without a national agreement. As long as we have a free society, men have an opportunity and a right to quit work in concert or as individuals. But logic and... is totally against any possibility of a national strike. It would not serve our interests to shut down the entire trucking industry. As a matter of fact, it would earn a great harm to our interest and our members. It certainly would not aid and assist the trucking industry in any respect to have a national stopping, nor would it serve the interest of the American people and the American government. So for all these reasons, there's no conceivable possibility of any strikes on a national scale in our trucking industry.
- Male Voice 3:* [Unintelligible]
- Harold Gibbons:* No. Same reason it didn't necessarily hold for railroads, and the railroads never had any intention to have a national strike. The railroads, if permitted to participate in collective bargaining freely, and

the government not intervene, may very well have shut down the Pennsylvania Railroad. But paralleling the tracks of the Pennsylvania are the tracks of the New York Central and the American people would now have suffered. Industry would not have been effected and collective bargaining would have solved the problem, and here for the first time the railroad industry would have had to sit down and discuss, intelligently and considerably, the problems of these people must be eliminated from the industry. I'm talking now about the process of attrition, perhaps the process of severance pay, the process of maintaining their rights as under seniority, which they fought to establish. But there was never any danger of a national railroad strike, as there is no danger of a national trucking strike through the operation of a national agreement.